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STATEMENT OF NICHOLAS G. GARAUFIS, CHIEF COUNSEL, FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AVIATION, CONCERNING AVIATION-RELATED ISSUES IN THE STATE OF HAWAII.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to appear before the Subcommittee today to discuss FAA efforts to support a safe, efficient aviation system in Hawaii. Accompanying me is Ron Morgan, the Acting Deputy Director of Air Traffic.

Before we update you on the specific issues you have asked that we be prepared to discuss, I would like to take a moment to briefly provide an overview of the FAA's activities in Hawaii.

FAA air traffic controllers staff the towers at Hawaii's six major airports at Lihue, Honolulu, Molokai, Kahului, Keahole-Kona, and Hilo, as well as the Combined Center Enroute Radar Approach Control, or CERAP, at Diamond Head Crater on Oahu. Other FAA personnel provide regulatory oversight, inspection, and enforcement of FAA safety standards and provide a local presence that oversees aviation security issues for the Islands. FAA maintains numerous navigational aids to ensure safe and accurate flight in all kinds of weather, and equipment to help predict the kind of weather pilots and passengers can expect. These are typically the kinds of facilities and services FAA provides on the mainland. The difference is that aviation plays an even greater role in travel in the State of Hawaii, given its island character. FAA's well-established presence

on the Islands helps ensure that Hawaiians and visitors alike are able to travel safely and efficiently between the Islands.

Under funding provided by the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), the FAA has provided over \$110 million since 1990 for necessary airport projects to expand or improve Hawaii's airports. Although funding to all States in both the entitlement and discretionary portion of the AIP program is declining as a result of Federal budget constraints, dollars dedicated to Hawaii have helped to accomplish, or plan for, significant airport infrastructure improvements, such as:

- a major project to extend runways and taxiways and the lighting to accompany them, along with security fencing and improvements to the service road at Keahole-Kona, with FAA grants totaling \$21.5 million of the investment;
- installation of security fencing and taxiways at Lihue Airport, with approximately \$1.3 million in Federal funds;
- production of an Environmental Impact Statement to assess the environmental affects of expansion at Kahului Airport, funded in part by a \$350,000 Federal contribution; and
- expansion and improvement of the terminal building at Honolulu International Airport, using over \$9.7 million in Federal monies.

As you can see, FAA's presence, in terms of facilities, personnel, and contributions toward maintaining and improving air travel to and from Hawaii, has been significant.

The Subcommittee has asked for information on the status of the FAA's efforts to move the CERAP facility out of Diamond Head Crater on Oahu. I would like to provide you

with a brief history of this facility, and then give you an update on the status of our efforts to relocate it out of Diamond Head Crater.

The CERAP provides air traffic control services to radar and non-radar covered oceanic air traffic, as well as Hawaiian en route and terminal traffic. In 1995, the facility logged some 493,713 operations. There are 115 FAA employees assigned to the CERAP, including 72 air traffic personnel and 43 airway facilities personnel who are responsible for facility maintenance.

In 1988, FAA proposed expanding the CERAP to approximately 2 1/2 times its current size to accommodate new operations, as part of the system-wide Area Control Facility consolidation program. When the plan was presented in 1991, the local community voiced opposition to the plan on environmental grounds. FAA terminated its Diamond Head expansion plans and began to explore relocating the facility elsewhere on Oahu.

Mr. Chairman, we recognize that our progress over the last three years in relocating the facility out of the Crater has been minimal. Although substantial work has been accomplished in preliminary site analysis, our activities have not met with your direction to relocate in a timely manner. We plan to rectify that.

We are committed to coming to a swift conclusion on our plans for relocation, and will request the funding necessary to make that happen in the near term. However, we believe

it is important for us to come to a well-reasoned decision on the operational requirements of the facility before we select a site and design and build a building. We only have one chance to make these decisions, and many millions of dollars are affected by our decision.

FAA has, as I mentioned, done extensive site analysis on Oahu. However, the question of how and where FAA can accommodate oceanic and enroute air traffic service requirements also needs to be evaluated, to operate the system as safely and efficiently as we can.

Consequently, we believe that these airspace allocation issues must be resolved before we can move forward with site acquisition and design. I would like to emphasize that no plans have been established to transfer control of all air traffic services provided by the CERAP out of Hawaii. A high-level working group is meeting this week to make some preliminary decisions about what kinds of operations will need to be accommodated at the new facility, and whether to recommend changes in the airspace for which the Diamond Head facility is responsible. This information will enable us to winnow the relocation options to the most viable alternatives, and to discuss those options in our report to Congress, to be submitted in May.

Once we narrow the alternatives, we plan to rapidly proceed with the more sophisticated cost analysis necessary to enable a final selection of a site and request the funding to accomplish that move.

I should note, however, that FAA has determined that there is a potential operational benefit associated with transferring the CERAP's non-radar oceanic responsibilities to the Air Route Traffic Control Center located in Oakland, California. The working group I mentioned will complete the analysis on the potential move this week. No FAA personnel would be transferred from Hawaii as a result of the move of non-radar oceanic airspace. I assure you that the personnel effects of other airspace decisions will be carefully assessed along with the operational benefits.

In concluding our discussion of the Diamond Head issue, we are working to provide you with a definitive timeline for our activities. We believe that by this Summer, we will come to a final conclusion on relocation. You can be assured that we will keep you and your staff well-informed about these decisions.

You have also asked us to discuss the FAA's plans for installing two additional Next Generation Weather Radar (NEXRAD) systems in Hawaii. I am pleased to announce that the system designated for placement on South Hawaii was delivered on March 7, and will be commissioned by early September. The property where the North Hawaii facility will

be located has been leased, and equipment delivery is scheduled for May, with the system expected to be operational by mid-February, 1997.

These NEXRAD systems, working with the two currently operating in Hawaii, will provide enhanced information concerning the location, severity, and movement of both routine and hazardous weather phenomena.

Finally, you have asked us to provide information on the FAA's plans relative to the OMEGA Worldwide Navigation System. Having completed its review of the OMEGA navigation requirements for the U.S. aviation industry, FAA has determined that the majority of the approximately 22,000 users of OMEGA will have converted to Global Positioning System technology by September of 1997. FAA does not expect to sponsor or fund OMEGA operations beyond that time. However, it is my understanding that the Office of Federal Coordination for Meteorology is in the process of revalidating OMEGA requirements beyond 1997.

That concludes my prepared statement, Mr. Chairman. We would be pleased to respond to any questions you may have.